



What You Need To Know About WFDSS - 2014

This document is a quick reference and review of recent enhancements, little known features, recommendations and things to consider that will help you use WFDSS more efficiently.

- [New WFDSS Releases](#)
- [New Data Layers](#)
- [Training Aids](#)
- [Little Known Features](#)
- [Recommendations](#)
- [Preseason Preparation Checklist](#)

New WFDSS Releases

The latest WFDSS release information is located in the upper right hand corner of the WFDSS Home Page under ***Latest Information***. Releases 4.8 through 4.10 were deployed in 2013. Release 4.11 is the most recent release. Below are a few highlights from these releases.

Feature	Description
WFDSS Login Screen	➤ There is now a link to the WFDSS Home Page so that users can quickly access the latest application information.
Requesting a New Account	➤ When someone requests a new user account for WFDSS, they must first review and acknowledge some preliminary conditions before continuing the application process. This ensures that only authorized personnel can access the WFDSS application, such as federal employees, tribal employees, and federal contractors.
User Name	➤ New user names must contain only lowercase letters, numbers and the special characters @, underscore (_), and/or period. Current user names that do not conform to this convention remain the same.
Password Requirements	➤ When setting your password, you now need to include at least three character sets (character set choices are uppercase alpha, lowercase alpha, numeric, and other) in addition to the other requirements.
WFDSS Web Browser Compatibility	➤ WFDSS is designed for and tested with Internet Explorer (IE) 8, 9, and Google Chrome web browsers. When you are running WFDSS with IE10 or 11, use the Compatibility Mode.
Incident, Intelligence, and Analysis Filters	➤ GA Editors, National Editors, and users assigned the Feedback role can share and transfer individual incident, analysis, and intelligence filters with one or more WFDSS users
Groups	➤ The Groups tab is located to the right of the Incident tab. A group is a collection of incidents represented by a user defined group name for the purposes of being able to quickly manage and review details about local, GA-wide, or national fire events. See About Groups .



What You Need To Know About WFDSS - 2014

Feature	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Users can generate map captures from a group map for inclusion in reports for incidents in the group. ➤ Users can view all decisions within a group. This enhances navigation to the incident content.
My Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ New sub tabs: Four new sub-tabs appear under the My Home Page. Each tab displays detailed information about your incidents, activities, map bookmarks, and system messages ➤ System Preferences: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ There are new USGS map layers available to users: USGS Topos, USGS Imagery, and USGS Imagery with Topo lines. You can change your default map layer preference on this page. The WFDSS default layer is USGS Topos. ✓ You can set layer values, such as the Nearby Incidents Proximity Distance and the Active Planning Area to display on all map pages. ✓ Set your Initial Page to "MY HOME" to ease navigation to your incidents you are managing as an "owner" or "approver".
LANDFIRE 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ This version of LANDFIRE is the default layer for WFDSS incidents.
Bookmarking Maps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Dispatchers, Authors, Fire Behavior Specialists and GA Editors can save their current map settings on the Situation, Intelligence, and Analysis Maps so they will be available the next time they login to WFDSS. All book marks are available from any map pages when logged into WFDSS. The bookmarks help with navigation too, when a user is working with multiple incidents. There is also the option to share any bookmark as a link with other users whose privileges allow them to view the map context.
Management Action Points (MAPs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ You can upload or download MAPs whether they are lines or polygons. WFDSS now stores lines in addition to polygons. ➤ Users can edit a non-published MAP numbers and change the application displayed MAP number when creating or editing a MAP. ➤ The default setting for MAPs is to generate a map image for individual M.A.Ps for inclusion in the Decision Document.
Uploading Shapes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ WFDSS accepts uploaded shape files that do not exceed 1500kb.
MODIS Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ On the map layerswitcher, you can review information about MODIS 6 Hr., 12Hr., 24 Hr., and Year-to-Date values.
Hourly Weather Forecast Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ From the Info tab on the Situation, Analysis, and Intelligence maps, you can now derive 6 days of hourly weather forecast for an incident's latitude and longitude, or for any point you select on any map display in WFDSS. A local National Weather Service (NWS) Forecast Office provides the hourly forecast data, often referred to as point forecast data, for the 2.5km grid cell that



What You Need To Know About WFDSS - 2014

Feature	Description
	contains the selected point. Inconsistency among point forecasts and associated elements may occur due to variation in forecast development and display among Forecast Offices.
FLAME ACT REPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ When all three of these conditions are met, the application generates a new FLAME ACT report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Recommended Organization is Type 1 or Type 2 team chosen by the local units. ✓ Incident size or latest perimeter size is at least 300 acres. ✓ The Incident Type is Wildfire. <p>These values of these three fields display on the FLAME ACT Report.</p>
Incidents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Creating an Incident:</i> Each new incident must include the Incident Type, Responsible Unit ID, and the Local Fire Number. ➤ <i>Incident Type:</i> Integration with the iRWIn project has required new incidents to be categorized by an Incident Type. There are three types of incidents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Wildfire: Refers to single incident fire events. ✓ Prescribed: Refers to fire events that are set in order to achieve management plan objectives. ✓ Other: Refers to all other events such as Complexes, All Risk, and False Alarms. ➤ <i>International Incidents:</i> You can now create incidents for any fire incident within 50 km of the US Border of Canada and Mexico (for Alaska it is within 10 miles.) The Intelligence map displays new state layer maps for Canada and Mexico. ➤ Jurisdictional Point of Origin can be edited by National Editors and GA Editors only. ➤ <i>Incident Quick Search:</i> This feature is located on the Incident tab. The Incident Quick Search feature allows you to quickly locate incidents by name and year. This feature no longer limits you to incidents within the last 365 days. It is located on the Incidents tab within the Incident List Filter section. ➤ <i>Periodic Assessment Emails:</i> If you are an incident Approver, you receive an email containing a link to the periodic assessment page when the assessment is due or overdue. The link requires you to login first before it navigates you to the Periodic Assessment. If more than one Approver exists for an incident, you can opt out of receiving the email, by navigating to the Incident Privileges menu option and deselecting the Email box beside your name. At least one incident Approver must receive the email.
Incidents > Situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The image capture allows you to auto generates a landscape oriented report if a "Report Name" is entered on the Map Capture



What You Need To Know About WFDSS - 2014

Feature	Description
	screen. This feature is available on all map pages. Allows a user to quickly print and share analysis results with others who do not have a computer.
Incidents > Objectives	➤ Incident Objectives and Requirements always display in ascending order, and the order they were entered.
Incidents > Course of Action	➤ There are no longer any default actions items displayed on this page.
Incidents > Relative Risk	➤ The Relative Risk Assessment is updated to reflect changes implemented by NWCG.
Incidents > Organization Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The term Organizational Needs Assessment is replaced by the term Organization Assessment (OA). ➤ The OA is updated to reflect the NWCG changes. Agency Administrators can now choose the type of organization they ordered to manage the incident.
Incidents > Decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Rationale section of a decision must be completed before publishing. ➤ Users can now capture individual and combined M.A.P. images. After creating a pending decision, users can remove the images if needed.
Incidents > Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Report Templates:</i> After the Incident Author, Data Manager, GA Editor, or National editor selects an Incident from the Incident List, they can create and edit a Report Template from Reports tab > Edit Report Templates > Template Filter. If other Report Templates exist already and have been marked National, they are available for review and can be copied to create a new template. Report Templates can be personal or national; personal can only be seen by the person who created the template, national templates are available for all eligible users to review. See About Report Templates. ➤ You can edit and delete the Map Capture generated report from the Situation or Analysis maps. The report is automatically generated in landscape orientation when a map capture is created. Users need to enter a report name during map capture to create these reports.
Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All WFDSS analyst assisted models provide the option of adding Notes to any input, landscape, or results page. You can add, edit or delete notes any time before an analysis is run or any time after, regardless of the status of the analysis. ➤ <i>Zero Conditioning Days:</i> Super Analysts can set the application so that Basic and Short Term Fire Behavior analyses can be run with zero conditioning days off. Analysis results do not display solar



What You Need To Know About WFDSS - 2014

Feature	Description
	radiation or fuel moistures.
Intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ You can filter the Intelligence Summary Report by Date Range and Incident Type. The Summary Reports are found in Intelligence under the Menu tab.
Data Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Data Management Notes:</i> Data Managers can add, edit, or delete five different types of data management notes from the Notes sub-tab to document the fire planning process and other incident decisions or events using one of five types of notes ➤ <i>Viewing Data Management Change History:</i> Data Managers can review change history for a unit and if needed, filter information by entry date range, types, and/or actions. Results display Date, User, FMU, Action and Comments. ➤ Strategic Objectives and Management Requirements always display in ascending order, and the order they were entered. ➤ Data Managers can export their data management from the WFDSS Production environment. After export, they can upload into the WFDSS Training environment for pre-season training.
Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ GA Editors can add comments when they grant or remove user roles. The comment will be emailed to the user.

New Data Layers

Data Layer	Description
Retardant Avoidance & Aquatic Retardant Avoidance Layers	This layer is currently available for Forest Service lands only. This layer indicates where the aerial application of fire retardant should be avoided in order to prevent potential impacts to federally listed threatened or endangered species. The layer was delivered as part of the 2011 Nationwide Aerial Application of Fire Retardant on National Forest System Land Environmental Impact Statement and was not developed by WFDSS. Current aerial fire retardant standards prohibit application within 300 feet of hydrographic features. Therefore, this data may contain duplicate hydrographic areas already covered by existing local standards. See Help> Aerial Retardant Avoidance Areas .
Estimated Ground Evacuation Time	The intent of this layer is to encourage thoughtful decisions about the risk to firefighters and how to mitigate those risks. This layer models the shortest ground transport time in hours from that point to a definitive care facility (hospital). Travel time is for transport only and does not include litter packaging or emergency treatment. This layer has been designed for strategic decision making and should not be used for



What You Need To Know About WFDSS - 2014

Data Layer	Description
	tactical or operational decisions. Help> Estimated Ground Evacuation Time.
Significant Fire Potential	The Significant Fire Potential forecast from Predictive Services has been added under <i>Fire Weather and Danger</i> . These layers can inform decisions and aid in completing the Relative Risk.
Unit Fire Planning	The Unit Fire Planning layers are comprised of the spatial data that was loaded pre-season by the unit data managers. The layers included here are Unit Outline, FMU and Other Unit shapes for units using the FMU planning process. The Spatial planning process will include: Unit Outline, Strategic Objective, Management Requirement and Other Unit shapes.
Hauling Chart	If a BASIC or Short Term Fire Behavior analysis is completed, Hauling Chart layer will be available under the Basic Outputs. This layer will display flame length in the following bins to reflect the hauling chart: 0-4 ft, 4-8 ft, 8-11 ft, 11-15ft, and 15ft+. There will be an actual hauling chart available later in the summer.




What You Need To Know About WFDSS - 2014

Training Aids

	Description
WFDSS 101	The lessons in this series are intended to be completed as a suite, and in numerical order, but can be used as stand-alone lessons to help guide your self-paced training in WFDSS. Each lesson contains one or more short exercises that will teach you how to use WFDSS tools, as well as ideas for incorporating the tools into your workflow. See the Training tab on the WFDSS home page.
YouTube WFDSS Support Videos Channel	This channel provides training videos that walk you step-by-step through many common tasks. If you have a YouTube account simply search for WFDSS Support Videos. To view new videos as they become available, subscribe to this channel. http://www.youtube.com/user/WFDSSSupportVideos?feature=g-high-u

Little Known Features

Feature	Description
Help	WFDSS has an extensive Help system that can be accessed any time by selecting the Help icon  in the upper right corner of any WFDSS screen. You can find topics alphabetically in the WFDSS Help index, or look for information using the search feature. The help information is being updated constantly to keep up with program enhancements and in response to user feedback, so check often.
KMZ File Downloads	KMZ files, Keyhole Markup Language Zip file is a file format that is used to display geographic information, such as using KMZ files in Google Earth. Any WFDSS user can open and view an incident KMZ file for a published decision directly from Google Earth, or download it to a computer, by selecting either <i>Save</i> or <i>Open</i> from the <i>Download KMZ</i> box. When viewing incident KMZ files from Google Earth, the KMZ file contains all mapping information (planning, MAPs, objective shapes, fire perimeter, and accepted fire behavior analyses) from the Incident folder, except for the unit shapes. This feature makes it easy to export and share WFDSS information for training, briefings or data management.
Smoke	The <i>Wildland Fire Air Quality Tools</i> link is available from the <i>Fire Related Links</i> in the menu. This link provides you with a suite of smoke modeling and forecasting tools. See http://firesmoke.us/wfdss/
WFDSS Lite	A mobile website available to all WFDSS users from their smart phones and tablet devices. This application has limited features compared to the full WFDSS application. For example you will not be able to view maps, Intelligence information, or Data management information.



What You Need To Know About WFDSS - 2014

Feature	Description
	<p>WFDSS Lite can be accessed from the WFDSS Home page under the <i>Sign Into Mobile Website</i>, or Mobile web sites can be found at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training: https://wfdss.usgs.gov/training_lite/faces/jsp/login/wlLogin.jsp Production: https://wfdss.usgs.gov/wfdss_lite/faces/jsp/login/wlLogin.jsp
IR Perimeter Uploading	<p>The raw compressed file produced after an IR flight contains three layers, Heat_Perimeter, Intense_Heat, and Isolated_Heat. The IR files need to be separated and re-compressed before uploading into WFDSS. If for example you want the Perimeter file only, download the IR compressed file to your computer and un-compress the file using Winzip or other extraction-compression application. Select only the files with Heat_Perimeter in the file name. There can be up to seven of these files corresponding to the perimeter. Zip or compress those files giving them a name you will recognize later. This new compressed file can now be uploaded to your WFDSS incident as a perimeter. The Intense Heat and/or Isolated Heat files as well as the Perimeter may also be compressed and uploaded to WFDSS as an Analysis Ignition, Barrier or Landscape Mask files. See Help>Uploading Shapes.</p>

Recommendations

Feature	Description
Management Action Points (MAP)	<p>MAPs should be developed from a strategic perspective not as tactical direction. Tactical direction must remain flexible and responsive to shorter term changes on the incident, whereas strategic objectives are based on the intended outcome. For example protecting Brown's Cabin from fire damage is strategic. Assigning a specific crew to accomplish specific tasks at Brown's Cabin is tactical. The MAPs should provide direction from the decision maker (intent) to the incident management organization to develop specific tactics or plans to achieve the MAPs strategic objective.</p>
Delegation of Authority	<p>➤ An Incident Management Team should relate to the published decision in WFDSS. There should be a direct connection between the Course of Action (leader's intent) in a WFDSS decision and the delegation of authority. Incident objectives, incident requirements, and the course of action should be used to frame the delegation of authority. Developing a decision prior to the team's arrival helps to provide clear direction to the team through a meaningful delegation of authority. A Delegation of Authority template is under development for WFDSS that will pull key elements from the decision to provide an editable Delegation of Authority letter. See About Report Templates.</p>



What You Need To Know About WFDSS - 2014

Feature	Description
Decision Content Rationale	<p>Decision Content Rationale: The decision rationale provides the opportunity to tell the "story" of the incident.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document why the decision was made to implement the selected course of action. • Document the risk decision dialog among the Agency Administrators and Incident Managers. <p>See WFDSS Help for content to consider when creating rationale.</p>
Complexing Fires	<p>There are advantages and disadvantages to complexing fires in WFDSS. Carefully consider the long term consequences of complexing two or more fires. One team managing two or more fires does not necessarily require combining the fires in WFDSS. Multiple fires can be managed under one financial code, and be managed separately in WFDSS. Trying to un-complex fires as one fire is declared controlled, out or the situation changes significantly, can be a problem. Complexes entered into WFDSS have to be marked as Incident Type>Other in order to comply with the iRWIn project data feeds from WFDSS. See WFDSS Complexing</p>
Updating a Decision	<p>It is acceptable to update and publish a decision if the Assessment information for a decision is the only information that has changed regarding the decision. For example, at the first of the month a new drought map might be available and can help a decision-maker reaffirm that the course of action remains appropriate. Reports should not be used to document anything relevant to a change in a decision or change the intent of the decision without publishing a new decision.</p>

Preseason Preparation Checklist (My Home tab)

✓	Feature	Description
<input type="checkbox"/>	Passwords	Users are allowed one account per person and it provides access to both WFDSS Production and Training sites. Your password must be changed every 60 days. If you have not logged into WFDSS recently you may still be able to log in, but you will be required to change your password. If the system does not allow you to log in and more than 90 days have passed since your last log in, you are likely locked out. Contact the Help Desk (1-866-224-7677) and request a password reset. Do not request a new account; this will cause confusion when preparing decision documents and performing other WFDSS functions.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contact Information	Check your contact information and ensure that it is up to date. This information is used by the WFDSS system and WFDSS users to contact you for various reasons, for example if you are an incident owner you will receive confirmation when any fire behavior analyses are completed on your incident to the email address listed in your



What You Need To Know About WFDSS - 2014

✓	Feature	Description
		Contact Information. If you have changed jobs, geographic areas, or even agencies you can simply update your Contact Information. Do not request a new account! Your WFDSS account is designed to stay with you throughout your career. See <i>Help</i> > Updating your Contact Information .
<input type="checkbox"/>	User Roles	Ensure that your User Roles are appropriate for your current position and job duties. To view your current User Roles select <i>My Home</i> > <i>User Roles</i> . You may also reference <i>Help</i> > Requesting Additional System Privileges or WFDSS User Roles to learn more about user roles and privileges. User roles granted in Production are automatically carried over to Training but conversely, user roles granted in Training are exclusive to the Training site only.
<input type="checkbox"/>	System Preferences	You may select preferred default settings to customize specific items, for example the default base map layer. New map layers are added periodically to the list of available Map Layers from System Preferences. The Map Layers listed in the right hand box will be available for display on WFDSS maps. All new available layers are now located in the right hand box, therefore available for viewing from WFDSS maps. Users must move those layers that are not needed back to the left hand box if they don't wish to display them on their WFDSS maps. See <i>Help</i> > Changing your System Preference .
<input type="checkbox"/>	Address Book	Check your address book to ensure it is up to date. Preseason is an excellent time to customize your My Address Book. You can set up groups now for use on incidents later. See <i>Help</i> > Address Book , or see the other WFDSS Help topics related to the address book such as, Creating a Group and Editing a Group .